



SACRAMENTO COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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CALFED Bay-Delta Program

August 16, 2000

Mr. Steve Ritchie, Acting Director
CAL-FED Bay/Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suit 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

Even though it would affect water supplies for all Californians, the environment and land use throughout much of California, Cal-Fed seeks to finalize the Bay-Delta Plan without more public hearings. While not required to do so, Mr. Ritchie, more time should be allowed for public meetings and written comment. It is the right thing to do.

The Cal-Fed plan would remove from production nearly a quarter of a million acres of California farmland. The Cal-Fed plan calls this "**unavoidable**." But it can and should be avoided, and Cal-Fed should look for ways to reduce farmland losses. Farmland losses mean lost jobs, less taxes and negative impacts on local economies.

Agriculture is the number one industry in California and farmland is an important natural resource that feeds people and provides wildlife habitat.

Farmers can run productive, wildlife-friendly farms only if they have reliable and affordable water. Cal-Fed should look to the future of all Californians and develop more water storage, with adequate yield for people, food production and wildlife. Additional stored water will help sustain people and the environment in dry years. We need more water storage. It's as simple as that. Otherwise, Cal-Fed will simply take the water away from farms, making the effect of droughts even more severe with less food and fiber production. Cal-Fed should work under its original premise to create a Bay-Delta water solution that is a "win-win" for everybody. Unfortunately Cal-Fed has turned its back on the agricultural segment of the equation.

Cal-Fed should hold public hearings to explain its plans before they become final. We need to know and understand the exact affects on agricultural land both for now and the future. Citizens should have adequate opportunity to review and understand the plan and to offer comments.

Sincerely,

Denis R. Lewis
President

Cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Congressman Richard Pombo

Congressman Doug Ose
Assemblyman Anthony Pescetti
County Supervisor Don Nottoli

To Represent and Promote Agriculture in Sacramento County

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